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Biden is 'old,' Trump is 'corrupt': AP-NORC poll has ominous signs for both in possible 2024 rematch

By WILL WEISSERT, EMILY SWANSON and DARLENE SUPERVILLE
Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden is "old" and "confused," and former President Donald Trump is "corrupt" and "dishonest." Those are among the top terms Americans use when they're asked to describe the Democrat in the White House and the Republican best positioned to face him in next year's election. Unflattering portraits of Biden and Trump emerge clearly in a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, which asked an open-ended question about what comes to mind when people think of them.



People walk past the White House in Washington, Tuesday, March 28, 2023.

Associated Press

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Biden is 'old,' Trump is 'corrupt': AP-NORC poll has ominous signs for both in possible 2024 rematch

Continued from Front

For Biden, the largest share of U.S. adults — including both Democrats and Republicans — mentioned his age. At 80, Biden is just three years older than Trump, but many Americans expressed real concerns about his ability to continue as president.

Trump, meanwhile, has been indicted in four cases featuring 91 total criminal counts and elicits words such as "corrupt" and "crooked" (named by 15%), along with "bad" and other generally negative comments (11%). Not far behind are words like "liar" and "dishonest" (8%). Another 8% offered generally positive comments like "good," though.

A deeper look doesn't improve things much for Biden or Trump. And while many of the criticisms reflect a familiar partisan divide, the poll shows neither man is immune to criticism from within his own party.

"He looks like he needs to be someone's kindly grandpa on the arm, not someone at the wheel of power," Justin Campbell, a 27-year-old Democrat and security guard in the Brookhaven area of Mississippi, said of Biden. He was even more negative about Trump, though, saying that the former president "acts like a kindergartner when people tell him 'no.'"

Campbell suggested that Trump reads so little about policy and national security that he might be "functionally illiterate." He said he plans to vote for Biden next year and, "I eagerly await Donald Trump being in jail." Such sentiments were common. Fully 26% of respondents use words like "old" or "outdated" to describe Biden, and another 15% mention things like "slow" and "confused."

Another 10% give generally negative comments about the president, and 6% use words like "corrupt" and "crooked." Just 6% offer words like "president" and "leader," and 5% use



People watch from their vehicle as President Donald Trump, on left of video screen, and Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden speak during a Presidential Debate Watch Party at Fort Mason Center in San Francisco, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020.

Associated Press

those like "strong" and "capable" — the top positive comments made about Biden.

Biden's age was referenced frequently even among Democrats, 28% of whom mention it — a significantly higher percentage than those who point to the presidency or leadership (11%) or strength and capability (11%).

Trump's negative comments center not on age but on his moral standing and conduct, along with things like "loudmouth" and "angry" (6%), "crazy" and "dangerous" (6%) and "narcissist" (6%). Some 5% use words like "strong" and "capable."

Rami Marsha, a 58-year-old CEO of a manufacturing company in Agoura Hills, California, is a registered Democrat who voted for Trump in 2016 and for Biden in 2020 — but says he'd likely leave the presidential race portion of his ballot blank if those two square off again in 2024.

"I think he might be having some dementia, and I don't think he has the power to run the country," Marsha said of Biden. But he was equally blunt about Trump: "I've had enough of him." That's a fairly common

sentiment. The poll shows that only 24% of Americans overall want to see Biden run again, while 30% say the same about Trump — and majorities say they are reluctant to support them if they are nominated again. Also, 62% of Americans say they have an unfavorable opinion of Trump; 52% say the same about Biden.

Biden's reelection campaign said the president's age is not a top motivator for voters, especially compared to the administration's policy accomplishments or key issues like abortion. It also noted that perceptions of the president and Democrats were not strong before last year's midterms — only to have the party defy expectations.

A Trump campaign spokesman did not answer messages seeking comment, but the former president has previously used his indictments to go on the political offensive, telling supporters at rallies, "I'm being indicted for you."

Larry Haith, a 73-year-old Idahoan and retired president and general manager of an auto parts firm, is a Republican who described Biden for the poll as an "idiot" and called Trump "ar-

rogant." He said he doesn't plan on voting for either next year.

Haith blamed Biden's economic policies for his cash net worth declining at least about \$150,000 and said the president "just needs to retire and get on with it." Though he had some kind words for Trump, Haith was also critical of the former president.

"I really like what he did, and I like the decisions that he made," said Haith, who added that, at first, "I really liked that gruffness about him." But those feelings have cooled, he said, in part because Trump has what Haith described as "a typical New York, arrogant attitude."

"I'm not going to support him anymore," he said. "I'm done with him."

Annie Doerr, a 60-year-old retiree from suburban Atlanta who described herself as a moderate Republican, said of Trump, "I thought some of his policies were good for Americans, but he's just too much of a distraction."

Doerr had problems with the president, too, comparing him to what she had seen while caring for her 95-year-old father.

"He reminded me a lot of

Biden, just things that come out of (Biden's) mouth," Doerr said.

"I just don't think he's fit to be president for four more years," she added. "He may have been when he first ran, but not now."

The poll also illustrated familiar ideological divides. It found that Republicans are more likely than Democrats to use words like "slow" and "confused" to describe Biden, 25% to 7%, as well as words like "corrupt" and "crooked" (14% to 0%) and "weak" or "unqualified" (9% to 2%).

For Trump, meanwhile, the top comments among Republicans include the generally positive (15%) along with things like "strong" (11%) and mentions of America or patriotism (8%), along with mentions of the presidency or leadership (6%).

Even some Republicans use negative words to describe Trump, though, including labels such as "loudmouth" or "angry" (7%). Others mentioned arrogance or pompousness (6%), narcissism (5%) or other generally negative comments (6%).

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to cite corruption (25% to 4%) and dishonesty (12% to 4%) to describe Trump. Seven percent of Democrats mention racism, bigotry, homophobia or misogyny among their top words to describe the former president. Those words were hardly invoked by any Republicans in the poll.

Susan Grant, a 66-year-old retired office manager for a nonprofit physician membership association from Westfield, Indiana, said Trump "does not need to run again for any office. He's not fit."

But she added that, "While I respect Biden, I think he's too old."

"I do feel like he's at the age where he probably needs to not run," said Grant, a Republican. "I'm not saying he's not able. But, overall, I would like to see younger people running for president." □

White House highlights how administration is helping unions

By **FATIMA HUSSEIN**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As worker actions continue from Hollywood to Detroit, and new labor unions crop up at firms like Starbucks and Amazon, the White House on Monday was highlighting its effort to bolster worker organizing throughout the U.S.

President Joe Biden is counting on critical labor support as he campaigns for a second term in office, holding his first re-election campaign rally at a Pennsylvania union hall in June, declaring: "I'm proud to be the most pro-union president in American history." The White House and Treasury on Monday issued a joint analysis on what the administration sees as the importance of unions, and also the White House efforts to safeguard and bolster them. There is "evidence that unions strengthen the middle class and grow the economy" by raising wages of members and improving health care, retirement and predictable scheduling plan benefits, according to the analysis.

"There have been recent signs of a reinvigorated la-



Striking writers and actors picket outside Paramount studios in Los Angeles on Friday, July 14, 2023.
Associated Press

bor movement, as union election petitions in 2022 bounced back from the pandemic to their highest level since 2015," the analysis says "and public opinion of labor unions is at its highest level in over 50 years." Vice President Kamala Harris, who leads the White House Labor Task Force, created to work with federal agencies to use their existing authority to sup-

port labor organizing and bargaining, told reporters unions were critically important. "When union workers bargain for higher pay, it increases pressure on non-union companies to raise pay as well to stay competitive in the labor market," she said. Workers calling for higher wages, better working conditions and job security, especially since the end of

the pandemic, have been increasingly willing to walk out on the job as employers face a greater need for workers. The Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations Labor Action Tracker logged 424 work stoppages which includes 417 strikes and seven lockouts involving approximately 224,000 workers in 2022. Despite the coverage of strikes and an administra-

tion that claims it is friendlier to unions, membership numbers are still waning nationally. A January BLS report states that 11.3 percent of U.S. workers were represented by a union in 2022, down by 0.3 percent from a year ago. Globalization, automation and the deterioration of legal support to workers over decades has brought down union participation numbers, administration officials said. Hollywood writers have been striking since early May and have not yet made a deal with the studios. Starbucks workers have unionized at more than 350 stores across the country and a collection of Amazon workers have joined the International Brotherhood of the Teamsters, in hopes of gaining union recognition.

Most recently, auto workers represented by the United Auto Workers union which still has not endorsed Biden's 2024 presidential run voted overwhelmingly to give leaders the authority to call strikes against Detroit car companies Stellantis, General Motors and Ford if a contract agreement isn't reached. □

Judge dismisses lawsuit by sorority sisters who sought to block a transgender woman from joining

By **MEAD GRUVER**

Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — A judge has dismissed a lawsuit contesting a transgender woman's admission into a sorority at the University of Wyoming, ruling that he could not override how the private, voluntary organization defined a woman and order that she not belong.

In the lawsuit, six members of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority chapter challenged Artemis Langford's admission by casting doubt on whether sorority rules allowed a transgender woman.

Wyoming U.S. District Court Judge Alan Johnson, in his ruling, found that sorority

bylaws don't define who's a woman.

The case at Wyoming's only four-year public university

drew widespread attention as transgender people fight for more acceptance in schools, athletics, work-

places and elsewhere, while others push back.

A federal court cannot interfere with the sorority chapter's freedom of association by ruling against its vote to induct the transgender woman last year, Johnson ruled Friday.

With no definition of a woman in sorority bylaws, Johnson ruled that he could not impose the six sisters' definition of a woman in place of the sorority's more expansive definition provided in court.

"With its inquiry beginning and ending there, the court will not define a 'woman' today," Johnson wrote.

Langford's attorney, Rachel Berkness, welcomed the ruling.

"The allegations against Ms. Langford should never have made it into a legal filing.

They are nothing more than cruel rumors that mirror exactly the type of rumors used to vilify and dehumanize members of the LGBTQIA+ community for generations. And they are baseless," Berkness said in an email.

The sorority sisters who sued said Langford's presence in their sorority house made them uncomfortable. But while the lawsuit portrayed Langford as a "sexual predator," claims about her behavior turned out to be a "nothing more than a drunken rumor," Berkness said. □



Two people walk on the University of Wyoming campus, June 14, 2016, in Laramie, Wyo.
Associated Press

Lockdown ended after apparent shooting at University of North Carolina's flagship campus

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM
Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP)

— An apparent shooting at the University of North Carolina's flagship campus Monday led students and faculty to barricade themselves in dorm rooms, offices and classrooms for hours until the lockdown was lifted.

About three hours after warning students to seek shelter indoors and avoid windows Monday, the school posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, "All clear. All clear. Resume normal activities."

Although school officials and local authorities didn't provide details about the alleged shooting, Gov. Roy Cooper posted on X that he had spoken to the Orange County sheriff and the state's public safety secretary and "pledged all state resources needed to capture the shooter and protect the UNC campus." Cooper's office declined to provide further information, saying it didn't want to get ahead of what local authorities were saying. School officials said as soon as they had verified information, they would share it. The school's first alert was sent out just after 1 p.m. At



Law enforcement and first responders gather on South Street near the Bell Tower on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus in Chapel Hill, N.C., Monday, Aug. 28, 2023, after a report of an "armed and dangerous person" on campus.

1:50 p.m., officials posted on X that the shelter-in-place order remained in effect and that it was "an ongoing situation." About 40 minutes later, the school added a post saying: "Remain sheltered in place. This is an ongoing situation. Suspect at large."

About two hours after the first alert went out, officers were still arriving in droves, with about 50 police vehicles at the scene and multiple helicopters circling over the school.

One officer admonished two people who tried to

exit the student center, yelling "Inside, now!" About 10 minutes later, law enforcement escorted a group of students out of one of the science buildings, with everyone walking in an orderly line with their hands up. Shortly before 4 p.m., students and faculty started emerging from campus buildings, with the lockdown over.

The report of the shooting and subsequent lockdown paralyzed campus and parts of the surrounding town of Chapel Hill a week after classes began at the

state's flagship public university. The university has approximately 20,000 undergraduate students and 12,000 graduate students. During the lockdown, a student told TV station WTVD that she had barricaded her dormitory door with her furniture. Another student, speaking softly, described hiding in fear with others in a dark bathroom.

Adrian Lanier, a sophomore computer science major, told The Associated Press that he was in a campus gym when the first safety alert was issued. He said

he and others sat against a wall, trying to stay as far away as possible from the doors and windows. He sheltered in place for a couple of hours as rumors spread across campus about what was happening. "No one really felt safe enough to leave. I didn't," Lanier said.

Other friends of his were barricaded in classrooms or went into the basement of the building they were in, Lanier said. Oliver Katz, an exchange student from Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, was working out at the campus gym with friends when he got the alert on his phone. Some students crowded into the locker rooms to get away from windows while others crouched in the corners and sat on the floor, he said.

They stayed there for about three hours before they were evacuated by police. "This never happens where I'm from," Katz said, adding that before he decided to study at UNC, it crossed his mind that school shootings were much more common in the United States. "It was intense. But I was a little surprised that other people weren't panicking that much." □

Biden will observe 9/11 in Alaska instead of the traditional NYC, Virginia or Pennsylvania events



President Joe Biden speaks on the anniversary of the Inflation Reduction Act during an event in the East Room of the White House, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden will observe next month's 22nd anniversary of the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil at an Alaska military base with service members and their families, the White House announced.

It will be the first time that a president has not attended any of the observances that have been held annually in New York City, Pennsylvania and Virginia, just outside Washington, according to an Associated

Press review of media coverage of these events.

Biden will stop in Alaska for the 9/11 observance at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage on his way back to Washington after he attends a summit in New Delhi with other world leaders and visits Vietnam on Sept. 10.

Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, will participate in the annual commemoration at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum in lower Manhattan. First lady Jill Biden will

lay a wreath at the 9/11 memorial at the Pentagon. Terrorists hijacked commercial airplanes on Sept. 11, 2001, and flew them into the Twin Towers in New York's financial district and the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. A fourth plane crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after passengers fought back. Nearly 3,000 people were killed in the attacks. Biden was a U.S. senator at the time. The White House did not announce which official will participate in the Pennsylvania observance. □

U.S., China agree to discuss export controls as commerce secretary visits

By JOE McDONALD
AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said she and her Chinese counterpart agreed Monday to exchange information on U.S. export controls that frustrate Beijing and set up a group to discuss other commercial issues, but neither side appeared ready to make concessions on disputes that have plunged relations to their lowest level in decades. Raimondo joined American officials including Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in July who have visited China in hopes of reviving chilly relations. They expressed optimism about improving communication but no progress on conflicts over technology, security, human rights and a lingering tariff war. For its part, Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government wants to revive foreign investor interest in China as it tries to reverse a deepening economic slump. Raimondo said she and Commerce Minister Wang



U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, right, speaks next to U.S. Ambassador to China Nick Burns, left, during a meeting with China's Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao, foreground, at the Ministry of Commerce in Beijing, Monday, Aug. 28, 2023.

Associated Press

Wentao agreed during a four-hour meeting to launch an "information exchange" on export controls. She said they also will set up a "working group" of officials and private sector representatives to "seek so-

lutions on trade and investment issues." A key Chinese complaint is limits on access to processor chips and other U.S. technology on security grounds that threaten to hamper the ruling Communist Party's ambition to de-

velop artificial intelligence and other industries. The curbs crippled the smartphone business of Huawei Technologies Ltd., China's first global tech brand. Raimondo said the information exchange will hold its first meeting Tuesday.

"The United States is committed to being transparent about our export control enforcement strategy," Raimondo told reporters at Ambassador Nicholas Burns's official residence. "We are not compromising or negotiating in matters of national security," she said. "But this is meant to be a dialogue where we increase transparency." Earlier, Wang told Raimondo that Beijing is ready to work together to "foster a more favorable policy environment for stronger cooperation" and "bolster bilateral trade and investment." Wang gave no details of possible initiatives. Beijing broke off dialogues with Washington on military, climate and other issues in August 2022 in retaliation for a visit to Taiwan by then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi of the House of Representatives. The Communist Party claims the self-ruled island democracy as part of its territory and objects to foreign governments having contact with it. □

EU official proposes 2030 as enlargement deadline for states waiting in line

By DUSAN STOJANOVIC
Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP) — Faced with the Russian aggression against Ukraine and fears of Moscow's increasing influence in parts of the Balkans, the European Union should make a "bold move" and accept new members by 2030, the European Council president said Monday. Speaking at an international strategic forum at the Slovenian lakeside resort of Bled attended by Western Balkan leaders, Charles Michel said that it was time for those states that have been waiting in an EU membership line for more than 20 years to be given "a clear goal." "We must talk about timing, we must talk about our

homework and I have a suggestion as we prepare next EU strategic agenda," Michel said. "We must set ourselves a clear goal: I believe we must be ready on both sides by 2030 to enlarge," he said, to a big round of applause. He said that the war in Ukraine "has shown that peace and democracy cannot be taken for granted." "This war is not just devastating Ukraine: this war has a profound impact on the future of our continent. It has a profound impact on global security," he said. EU officials fear that Russia could try to destabilize the Balkans, which went through a bloody war in the 1990s, and thus shift world attention from its aggression in Ukraine. Russia's

Balkan ally Serbia has refused to join EU sanctions against Moscow, although Belgrade says it respects Ukrainian territorial integrity. The Balkan states are at different stages of their EU accession talks. Many have been stalling on implementing the main EU preconditions for membership, such as the rule of law, free elections and media. The EU's regular enlargement update is due in October, when EU officials are expected to report on progress in negotiations with the six Western Balkan states that have been waiting in line for more than two decades Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Kosovo. For Ukraine and Moldova, which also want to join, the

EU will decide on opening their full-on accession negotiations at an EU summit in December. In his speech during the opening of the

Bled forum on Monday, Slovenian Prime Minister Robert Golob said that the EU enlargement was a pressing issue. □



In this photo provided by the Slovenian Government, European Council President Charles Michel speaks during the Bled Strategic Forum 2023 at the Bled Festival Hall in Bled, Slovenia, Monday, Aug. 28, 2023.

Associated Press

8 U.S. Marines remain in a hospital after a fiery aircraft crash

By **ROD McGUIRK**

Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)

— Eight U.S. Marines remained in a hospital in the Australian north coast city of Darwin on Monday after they were injured in a fiery crash of a tiltrotor aircraft that killed three of their colleagues on an island.

All 20 survivors were flown from Melville Island 80 kilometers (50 miles) south to Darwin within hours of the Marine V-22 Osprey crashing at 9:30 a.m. Sunday during a multinational training exercise, Northern Territory Chief Minister Natasha Fyles said.

All were taken to the Royal Darwin Hospital, and 12 had been discharged by Monday, she said.

The first five Marines to arrive at the city's main hospital were critically injured and one underwent emergency surgery.

Fyles said she would not detail the conditions of eight who remained in the hospital out of respect for them and their families.

"It's ... a credit to everyone involved that we were able to get 20 patients from an extremely remote location on an island into our tertiary hospital within a matter of



In this photo released by Australian Department of Defense, United States Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft are parked at RAAF Base Darwin, Australia, Aug. 11, 2023, during Exercise Alon at the Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2023.

hours," Fyles told reporters. The Osprey that crashed was one of two that flew from Darwin to Melville on Sunday as part of Exercise Predators Run, which involves the militaries of the United States, Australia, Indonesia, the Philippines and East Timor.

All 23 Marines aboard the lost aircraft were temporarily based in Darwin as part of the Marine Corps' annual troop rotation.

Around 150 U.S. Marines

are currently based in Darwin and up to 2,500 rotate through the city every year. They are part of a realignment of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific that is broadly meant to face an increasingly assertive China.

The bodies of the three Marines remained at the crash site, where an exclusion zone would be maintained, Northern Territory Police Commissioner Michael Murphy said.

The cause of the crash had

yet to be explained and investigators would remain at the site for at least 10 days, Murphy said.

The Osprey, a hybrid aircraft that takes off and lands like a helicopter but during flight can tilt its propellers forward and cruise much faster like an airplane, crashed into tropical forest and burst into flame. Before Sunday, there had been five fatal crashes of Marine Ospreys since 2012, causing a total of 16

deaths.

The latest was in June 2022, when five Marines died in a fiery crash in a remote part of California east of San Diego. A crash investigation report last month found that the tragedy was caused by a mechanical failure related to a clutch.

There had been 16 similar clutch problems with the Marine Ospreys in flight since 2012, the report found. But no problems have arisen since February when the Marine Corps began replacing a piece of equipment on the aircraft, the report said.

Emergency responders were surprised the death toll from Sunday's crash was not higher.

"For a chopper that crashes and catches fire, to have 20 Marines that are surviving, I think that's an incredible outcome," Murphy said. Defense Minister Richard Marles was also grateful that the toll was not worse.

"It's remarkable that in many ways, so many have survived," Marles told Nine News television. "This remains a very tragic incident and the loss of those lives are keenly felt," Marles added. □

Haiti police probe killings of parishioners who were led by a pastor into gang territory

By **EVENS SANON**

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— The director of Haiti's National Police vowed Monday to hold accountable

those who encouraged hundreds of parishioners to take up machetes and sticks over the weekend to try and rid a community of gang members, only to be fatally shot by them.

Police Chief Frantz Elbé said the group's religious leader, identified as Marcel Zidor, participated in the protest Saturday and was accompanied by unidentified people clad in olive green carrying assault rifles as they and the parishioners marched toward the community of Canaan.

Elbé said the group drew gunfire from gang members, and that "multiple" people were killed and several kidnapped, though he did not provide numbers.

He said police were trying to recover the bodies of those killed in Canaan, a community established north of the capital by survivors of the country's devastating 2010 earthquake. The community is controlled by a powerful gang whose leader goes only by "Jeff," and who is an ally of another gang known as "Five Seconds."

Police said in a statement that they had tried to convince the religious group to stop their plan "to avoid a carnage by criminals who have an arsenal of war." Elbé noted that the group had not notified police about the protest as required, and that officers were unable to halt

the crowd partly because it had split up into two groups.

"Police did everything to stop them," he said at a news conference, calling the event a "tragedy."

Zidor, the pastor, could not be immediately reached for comment. An Associated Press team visited the church on Monday, but its big metal gates were closed, and no one responded to requests for entry.

Tranquil Florant, a 32-year-old homeopathic doctor who is a member of the church, told the AP that the pastor announced plans for the weekend march on Thursday during an all-night prayer. □



A woman cries as she and other residents flee their homes to escape armed clashes between rival criminal groups in the Carrefour-Feuilles district of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, August 15, 2023.

Associated Press

Aruban snacks and where to find them

ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a “kroket,” which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the “bitterbal”.

These two snacks are typically found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find pastechis and kroketts at local bakeries and snack shops, like Bright Bakery in Piedra Plat, Huchada in Santa Cruz or Pastechi House in the city center. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for



on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing “batido”? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batido shops next the flea markets downtown, or if you're on your way to San Nicolas, at Mauchi Smoothies and Juice Bar in Savaneta (located at the side of the main road).

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-

moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

1. Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
2. Along the main road next to the airport field.
3. At the California Light House.
4. At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert “cocada” or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them! □

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was also a frequently visited

beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach. Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.

While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the “Baby Bridge” or “Daughter Bridge”. □



The Natural Bridge pre-collapse



The Baby Natural Bridge



Current state of the Natural Bridge

Remember Amuse Bistro?... They're back with a new concept; The Journey



Known for their successful and top-notch establishments Amuse Bistro and Amuse Sunset, Chef Patrick van der Donk and his wife Yvette, who is a certified sommelier, are back with their latest gastronomic adventure that is now to be found at The Journey, beside the famous red windmill (De Olde Moulin) just off Eagle Beach, and will surely bring a brand new concept to take you on a culinary journey you will never forget.



A family of 5, Chef Patrick, his wife Yvette and their 8 year old triplet sons, started their trajectory about a decade ago, with the renowned and loved Amuse Bistro that saw immense success. Due to a tragic incident in which the restaurant burned down, they gathered all their strength and continued their success at a new location behind the airport, as a brand new beginning named Amuse Sunset until they saw it come to an end. After overcoming unforeseen circumstances like the pandemic, the family is stronger than ever and reading to begin a new adventure and welcome you aboard.

The Journey offers a brand new, elegant and chic concept. Taking the table in 'Chef's Table' to heart, this new interpretation of 'chef's table' features stand-alone tables which seat only 20 patrons, all who must arrive before 7pm. Once you choose to embark on this adventure, the night will start once you arrived at your destination, right next to the mill in Palm Beach, where you will be welcomed with a toast of bubbles (on the house) on the terrace while you wait for the beginning of an unforgettable night. Once the clock hits 7pm, you will be taken into the restaurant for a magical five-course Chef's choice pre-fixed menu that will take your taste buds on a high class world tour.

You can opt to pair your courses with the sommelier's expertly curated choice of fine wines by the glass or order a bottle from their impressive wine list. With an open kitchen concept, you get to witness the chef bring his inspiration and creations to life. By the end of the night, you are guaranteed to have made a few new friends with whom you've enjoyed a wonderful experience of culinary bliss.

The Journey is open from Mon-Fri and is reservation only, we ask that all guests with a reservation arrive before 7pm. For further questions or information, refer to their website <https://thejourneyaruba.com/> or contact Yvette at +297 565 0535

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Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at Sasaki Apartments

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing a Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba. This Ambassador was respectfully honored with a certificate acknowledging his years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years con-

secutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years
consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years
consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was:

Goodwill Ambassador
Mr. Joseph Hyman from New York,
United States.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Sasaki Apartments bestowed the Ambassador certificate to the honoree, presented him with gifts, and also thanked him for choosing Aruba as his favorite vacation destination



and his home away from home.

home."

- Aruba's friendly people.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's year-round sunny weather.
- Aruba's Tradewinds.
- "Reuniting with my Aruba family and friends."
- "Aruba is my home away from

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honoree for his continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.



It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among

the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after

some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties. Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short lifespan: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant. □

Sources: Etnia Nativa & goldminer-anch.com.

XLIII

The Aloe industry of Aruba

ORANJESTAD— Aloe led a thriving existence on our island where it was introduced around 1840; limestone soil and dry weather were the best conditions for aloe to thrive. Of the 500+ species, only a few were used traditionally as herbal medicines, Aloe Vera being the most commonly used species.

1 Aloe barbadensis with its yellow flowers @ Etnia Nativa garden

The Aruba aloe also known as 'barbaloin', has an aloin content of 22 percent bitter, yellow-brown colored compound noted in the exudate of at least 68 Aloe species, whereas the content of the aloe elsewhere in the world is supposed to average 15 percent at the highest.

From March to June the harvest is brought in, a very suitable time for Aruba since this is the dry season, during which in the seventeenth century and virtually till about 1928, there was little employment.

2 Aloe drip system

The resin-sap, called 'aze-ta' in Papiamentu, what stands for oil, was allowed to leak from the plants. The thick pulpy leaves sharply dentate at the edges were laid in drip-troughs, sloping gutters consisting of two boards. Payment for this heavy work was made by the gallon; hence deceit was sometimes practiced by thinning the sap. It was

transported in small lidded casks, strapped on donkeys in pairs, to the boiling -pots, to be reduced by evaporation. This reducing of the sap to resin took place in open brass pots of about 200 liters content. The thick liquid was subsequently ladled into oil-boxes where it cooled off and coagulated into a mass which contracted to a considerable degree. Such a box contained 57.5 kilos of resin. Sometimes the resin was poured into calabashes, in which packing slightly higher prices could be made. Today modern aloe products are made locally.

3 Old times of aloe recollection

Mr. Laurens Oduber was once one of the main exporters of this coveted resin owning vast pieces of land surrounding Oranjestad. The aloe resin was sent abroad, most of it by far to New York, but also to Texas, Hamburg and London.

About 1890 prices began to fall and in 1900 no more than three dollar cents per pound could be obtained. Nevertheless during this period aloe-growing was continued on Aruba though it was impossible to make profits.

The better grades in particular went to London, realizing as much as 60 shillings per hundred pounds. In the London of before the First World War the aloe from all the three islands was priced a little higher than that from



the Cape: 31 to 36 shillings for the island grades, 29 to 32 shillings for the Cape ones.

As a source of income at any rate the aloe was important enough for the parish-priest of Sabaneta to keep a field as 1916 "in favor of the Church".

Like all other industries aloe-growing was affected by the coming of the oil-industry. Not until 1950 was aloe-planting on a large scale resumed.

In 1947 the Aruba aloe products company was inaugurated, meanwhile in the previous century the use of aloe was common among the inhabitants but without applying any previous process not until about 1890 did they begin to extract its aloin in order to work it up to laxatives, etc. Aruba always shipped plain aloe-juice, which had to be thinned elsewhere so as to obtain aloin. The Aruba Aloe Products Company now purchases this

juice to work it up at factory in 1949. This aloin is shipped direct from Aruba to the United States, export to England.

Under the supervision of an expert, the American Irving D. Cantor, about six men are at work in this industry, whose foundation cost half a million guilders. It goes without saying that the factory only works full time in the period from July to January, but since already in March the first sap is bought, this newest industry on our island represents an important asset. However, the growth of the marketing of aloe was threatened by the rights of protection in other countries and by the circumstance that young people are not inclined to seek employment in it and prefer another type of work. In 1951 its production amounted to approximately 15,000 pounds, representing around 30 percent of world production.

4- Aloe Art by recycled plastic by Etnia Nativa

To get to know more about Aruba and its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session has been entertaining curious participants for decades. Mail us at etnianaativa03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels. □



Don't forget to visit Aruba's famous Red Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to Find the Anchor?

The anchor is a “must see” landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when your visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the “T” junction to Baby Beach.

Depending on where you are staying on the island, follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the Anchor Size

It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos, is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall.

On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the “fluke” or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.

Where did the Anchor Come From?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

“According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of the island. This is the usual shallow

mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc. The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the tension exerted on the winch, it broke, and they lost the anchor and its chain.”

Story 2:

“Mr. Curiel also said that at one time a small tanker with a Korean crew, while lifting their anchor also lifted another anchor near the inner harbor. When the ship asked for assistance, he went with his tugboat along with a barge, to help. But eventually they had to cut the chain and let the anchor go to the bottom because they could not untangle them.”

How Did The Anchor Become a Landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba; Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division

Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis – Owner of Filtec at Zeewijk in San Nicolas), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr. at his famous Charlie's Bar and Restaurant in San Nicolas. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The “anchor”, which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option. Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then relocated to its present location and dedicated “To All Seamen” on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the Years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After Charles Brouns Jr died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam Speziale, requested assistance

from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery, graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was rededicated “To All Seamen” in a formal ceremony in memory of Charles Brouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seaman who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The Best Time to Visit

When your planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (keep an eye out for our future editions, we publish our recommendations!).

With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. ☐



The Red Anchor situated at the entrance of former Lago Colony in San Nicolas

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Taken — (surprised)
- 6 Like gymnasts
- 11 Inert element
- 12 Fleet-based
- 13 Rooftop spots for helicopters
- 15 Memorable time
- 16 Compete
- 17 "Science Guy" Bill
- 18 Chops down
- 20 Charity events
- 23 Young pigeon
- 27 Full range
- 28 Spur on
- 29 Rat's home
- 31 Singer Jackson
- 32 Red-ink entry
- 34 Outdated
- 37 Droop
- 38 Summer sign
- 41 Pain-reducing mats
- 44 Christens
- 45 Defame, in a way
- 46 Start
- 47 Kind of question

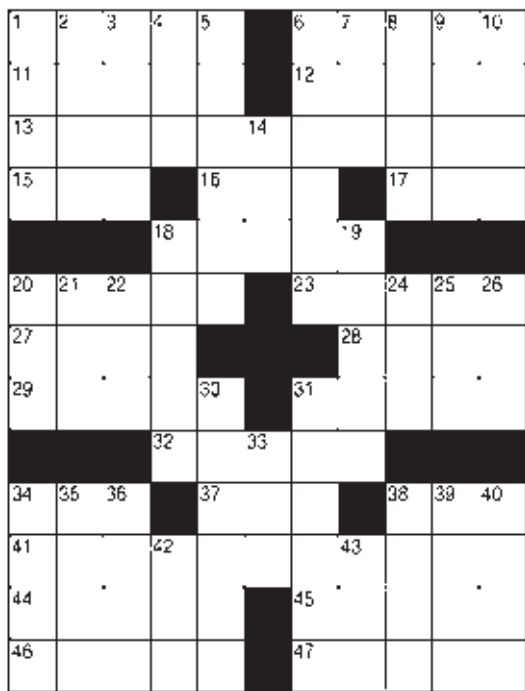
DOWN

- 1 Wheel bar
- 2 Yellow-stone beast
- 3 "Frozen" character
- 4 Atlantic catch
- 5 Cutlery
- 6 Little dears
- 7 Ravine
- 8 Infamous czar
- 9 Titled woman
- 10 Otherwise
- 14 Zero
- 18 Disconcerted
- 19 Hunker down
- 20 Empty talk
- 21 Had a nosh
- 22 Near the ground
- 24 Coffee dispenser
- 25 Candle count
- 26 Track action
- 30 Stand up to
- 31 Like gelatin
- 33 Prohibit
- 34 "Dear me!"
- 35 Incline
- 36 River stoppers
- 38 Research settings
- 39 Genesis place
- 40 Capital on a fjord
- 42 Golf need
- 43 Diner dessert



Yesterday's answer

- 21 Had a nosh
- 22 Near the ground
- 24 Coffee dispenser
- 25 Candle count
- 26 Track action
- 30 Stand up to
- 31 Like gelatin
- 33 Prohibit
- 34 "Dear me!"
- 35 Incline
- 36 River stoppers
- 38 Research settings
- 39 Genesis place
- 40 Capital on a fjord
- 42 Golf need
- 43 Diner dessert



8-29

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's. X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-29

CRYPTOQUOTE

H N Q ' P J D P V D F P D A H X V

T F D T B P N N U T Z C

N Y P N H X V . — E W J J

A N M D A F

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: LIVE IN THE SUNSHINE. SWIM IN THE SEA. DRINK IN THE WILD AIR. — RALPH WALDO EMERSON

How PayPal is using AI to combat fraud, and make it easier to pay

By KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Artificial intelligence has been the buzzword of 2023 ever since ChatGPT made its public debut earlier this year, with businesses, schools, universities and even non-profits looking for ways to integrate AI in their operations. John Kim, chief product officer for PayPal, spoke with The Associated Press about how the company is using the early proliferation of artificial intelligence technologies in its business, as well as PayPal's future in payments when there's so much competition. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Q: How have security issues changed since you've been in this role or similar roles? How much more complicated or sophisticated are threats or opportunities to protect customer data?

A: One way you can put it is that the fraud is a pretty big business, it's growing and getting more sophisticated by the day. It used to be that you would get, let's say, an email sent to you and you'd find something off about it, right? Like there's a misspelling and you think "Gosh, I don't see this person misspelling this common thing" or the email seems to imply that it doesn't have a deep understanding of who I am. Then it became voices over the phone trying to convince you to do something. Now people can create whole identities using AI.

Q: How are you integrating AI into the work you're doing? Where do you see the most promise for AI in payments?



Associated Press Illustration/Peter Hamlin

A: We're planning on launching three new products with ties to AI in the next 120 days. For example, we have a checkout feature we are rolling out that uses AI to keep track of all the permutations of your addresses and personal information that you might use, and use AI to predict the right one to use with the right merchant. We currently try to detect unusual patterns for example, patterns where fraudsters are trying to test your stolen card out to see if it's good or not and alert you through the PayPal wallet so you can get that card shut down with your bank quickly. But detecting these patterns can get really complicated, and the patterns can change on the fly, so AI we believe will help us anticipate these changes and keep us ahead.

Q: But on that same point, where do you think AI is being oversold in some ways, or where do you think that the use case in your industry isn't really there quite yet?

A: I think AI has captured a lot of people's imaginations this year. It's made its way to boardrooms, into

stores, every product conversation. Some people have been skeptical, and I think some skepticism is healthy. For example, we want to use AI to increase our chatbots' capability to engage with customers, but how much do we invest in such technology which can be expensive to develop and run when a customer service agent could do it better? Cost is going to be a massive issue. But in this short timetable since ChatGPT launched in March, I think you can't dismiss any claim you hear about AI at the moment because it's moving so fast.

Q: A lot of competition has entered into the payments space in the last several years. Apple Pay. Google Pay. Buy now, pay later. PayPal is the oldest company in the online payments industry. What challenges have there been in trying to differentiate PayPal from the competition?

A: PayPal really was a one-of-a-kind company for much of the early part of its life. So back then it was really about just getting scale. You didn't really have to sell the value proposition. But now we really have to focus on the value proposition. Customers every day choose how they wish to pay for things, so you need to provide value above just being a method to pay, like security and fraud protection, or letting people now they are fully protected while at the same time making us the easiest way to pay. □

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'Gran Turismo' takes weekend box office crown over 'Barbie' after all

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
AP Film Writer

The box office results are in and Sony's racing movie "Gran Turismo" won the weekend over "Barbie," after all. On Sunday, "Gran Turismo" appeared to be neck-and-neck with Warner Bros.' "Barbie," now in its sixth weekend, with both hovering just over \$17 million. But Monday actuals reported by the studios provided a clear winner: "Gran Turismo" ended up with \$17.4 million from North American theaters against "Barbie's" \$15.1 million.

As is usually the case with new wide releases, "Gran Turismo's" total also included earnings from Thursday night pre-shows (\$1.4 million). More unconventionally, however, Sony also factored in \$3.9 million from other preview screenings (or "sneaks") held before Thursday a less commonly used but still standard practice.

"Gran Turismo" was originally set for a wide release on Aug. 11, but with actors unable to help promote the film as the actors strike stretches on, Sony pivoted and instead opted for limited preview screenings and fan events for two weeks, leading up to a national rollout this past weekend. It was an unusual weekend in multiplexes. □

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‘Holler, Child’ is a profound short story collection about Black lives in America

By **DONNA EDWARDS**
Associated Press

LaToya Watkins has surpassed the high bar set by her beautifully crushing debut novel, “Perish,” with a collection of short stories titled “Holler, Child.” Heavily rooted in west Texas where the author grew up, the 11 fictional pieces focus on Black lives and the huge range of people and relationships within to form a profound collection.

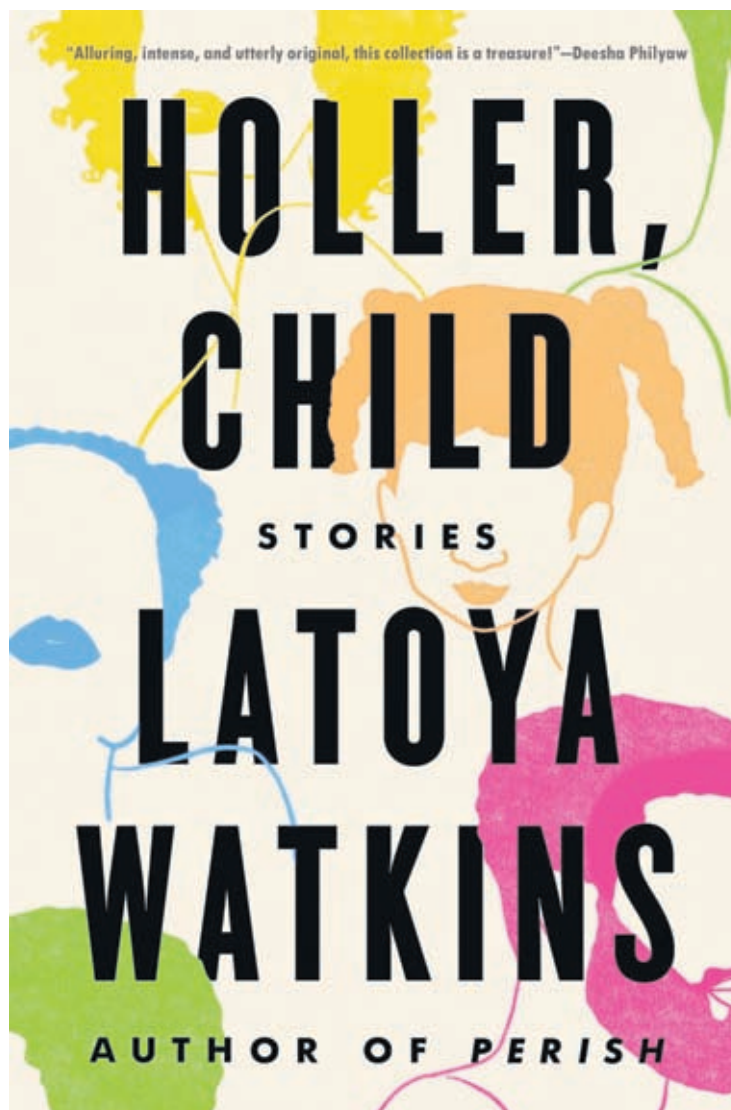
In the namesake short story, which includes some of the most brutal scenes in the book, the bloodied face of the narrator’s son reminds her of the day she was raped and beaten. “Holler, Child” being what she commanded her 17-year-old self to do way back then, but couldn’t. Now, confronted with the possibility that her son may have raped someone, she has a chance to handle things differently.

Its ending is completely unexpected a battlefield of conflicting logic and emotion that’s hard to fathom, but also strangely sensical. While many of the pages are about mothers and wives, some are from a

male perspective, like “Dog Person.” The narrator convinces his girlfriend to accept his dog as a part of himself in a story that turns out to be absolutely heart-wrenching. Layers of betrayal and hurt and blame and sadness have nowhere to go, so they fester. What does the dog have to do with it? It’s impossible to say, exactly, even though the dog is the keystone of the story.

Generations of trauma, sacrifice and striving make the characters complex and Watkins fits loads of information into just a handful of pages by skipping unnecessary context. Instead, she draws on societal truths and the reader’s empathy to form the solid foundation beneath each story.

Each voice brings something special, every narrative hard-hitting yet tender. Then, in the final short “Time After,” it all comes home. And, really, all the stories are about coming home wherever or whomever home may be, and regardless how the characters feel about it. In many cases, home is west Texas. In some, it’s a mother, or



This cover image released by Tiny Reparations shows “Holler, Child” by LaToya Watkins

Associated Press

the first year it was officially recognized as a federal holiday despite over a century of celebrations helps to frame the motif of gender roles and divisions between men and women throughout “Holler, Child.” It’s a messy, fluid thing that she explores in various forms: a wife completely fed up with her husband after decades of marriage; a husband who feels his wife has peeled away pieces of him over the years; two sisters in search of the brother who was disowned because of his identity.

Those male-female relationships go on to influence others, like the daughter who confronts her mother for her cold-heartedness; the mother who decides to love her kids out of spite for her husband; and the young woman who sees her parents in a new light after her baby’s father refuses to help.

The stories lay bare the death of a child, a partner, a sibling, a pet topics that, in less careful hands, might be beyond ethical approach in a mere 20 pages.

oneself. An article by Watkins for Juneteenth this year

Trans-Siberian Orchestra will return with a heavy metal holiday tour, ‘The Ghosts of Christmas Eve’

By **MARIA SHERMAN**
AP Music Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Trans-Siberian Orchestra the

heavy metal, classical music, theater production, pyrotechnics and laser light-show hybrid will return this



Members of Trans-Siberian Orchestra perform on Nov. 11, 2022 during a rehearsal for their 2022 Winter Tour at Mid-America Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Associated Press

winter.

“The Ghosts of Christmas Eve the Best of TSO & More,” will hit 62 cities and deliver 104 performances in both matinee and evening sets. It kicks off on Nov. 15 at the Resch Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and runs through Dec. 30, concluding at the Xcel Energy Center in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Al Pitrelli, TSO’s guitarist and music director, says that since the band started 28 years ago, their winter tours have become a tradition for loyal fans and their families.

“I call them repeat offenders,” he jokes.

Pitrelli estimates that nearly

half the attendees have been “coming to us since the jump.”

Fans can expect a memorable performance that references the band’s 1999 “The Ghosts of Christmas Eve” television film and album. The story follows a young girl who runs away from home on Christmas Eve; she’s alone, visions come to her, and eventually she makes her way back to her family at midnight, just in time for the Christmas holiday. Singers represent different characters, woven into a narrative by the late founder Paul O’Neill.

Pitrelli believes the reason TSO performances continue to draw people in is

found in the story.

“Everybody misses somebody, especially on Christmas,” he says. The show provides an arena for people to feel less alone, “wrapped up in the world’s biggest rock and roll production,” he adds.

The numbers don’t lie: As of July 2022, Pollstar put Trans-Siberian Orchestra’s box office gross at \$769 million. Tickets for the 2023 holiday tour will go on sale on Friday, Sept. 15, at 10 a.m. local time. Limited \$39 tickets will be available for purchase within the first week, or while supplies last. A dollar from each ticket sold will be donated to charity.

Simone Biles wins a record 8th U.S. Gymnastics title a full decade after her first

By WILL GRAVES
AP National Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) —

Simone Biles is not going to explain herself. Part of this is by design. Part of this is because she simply can't.

When the gymnastics star is at her best, as she was on Sunday night while winning her record eighth U.S. championship, she feels like she's in a "fever dream." It's not autopilot exactly. It's more of a vibe. A flow. It's in those moments that the doubts that still plague her almost daily even now, a decade into a run of unprecedented excellence, fade away.

There is no thinking. No overanalyzing. No "twisties." All of it recedes into the background. Her coach Laurent Landi calls it a skill. Biles, even at 26, won't go that far.

Maybe because she simply doesn't want to.

She spent a long time, far too long, getting caught up in her head. She's intent on not doing it this around. So yeah, she was smiling midway through a floor routine that made almost every other competitor on the floor stop what they were doing to watch and drew a standing ovation from a portion of the sellout SAP Center crowd. No, she can't explain why. When her coaches told her she'd nailed every tumbling pass, she was clueless.

"It just doesn't feel real for some reason," Biles said.

It is. Remarkably.

Ten years ago she was a teenage prodigy who doesn't remember much from her ascension to the top of her sport. She was always fixated on the next thing. World championships. Team camps. The Olympics.

Now she's a 26-year-old newlywed determined to enjoy this. For real. Six months ago she wasn't sure she was all in. Three weeks ago she returned to competition in Chicago feeling as if she was going to "throw up" every time she saluted the judges.

The woman who posted



Simone Biles competes on the beam during the U.S. Gymnastics Championships, Sunday, Aug. 27, 2023, in San Jose, Calif.

Associated Press

a two-day all-around total of 118.40 this weekend in northern California four points clear of runner-up Shilese Jones and well ahead of Florida junior Lianne Wong in third place is not ready to hit fast forward. She won. She's letting herself be happy this time. That didn't always happen before.

"We really try to celebrate our success individually and as a team just so that in a couple of years you can remember this," she said. "Because I really don't remember a lot from the past."

She knows that gymnastics won't last "forever" even if, for her in a way it has. Peaks aren't supposed to last this long.

Most elite gymnasts at 26 at least the ones who haven't retired are simply hoping to hold on to what they have. The athlete who became the oldest woman to win a national title since USA Gymnastics began organizing the event in 1963 is not interested in that. Landi called Biles' floor routine in the finals the best he'd ever

seen her do.

"I think it's maturity," he said.

Biles' eight crowns moved her past Alfred Jochim, who won seven between 1925-33 when the Amateur Athletics Union ran the championships and the men's competition included rope climbing.

Yes, really.

The sport has come a long way over the last century. No one has spent more time at the far end of the Bell curve than Biles, whose singular talents continue to push boundaries.

She's training smarter these days, her only real acquiescence to the miles she's put on it for the last 20 years. While she remains one of the most visible active athletes in the Olympic movement, she's making it a point not to let the world in on every single little thing as she eyes a trip to Paris next summer.

Biles joked it's because people are "nosy." The reality is, she'd just like a little privacy.

"I like to keep (my goals) personal, just so that I know

what I'm aiming for," Biles said. "I think it's better that way. I'm trying to move a little bit differently this year than I have in the past. I think it's working so far, so I'm going to keep it secretive."

There appears to be more balance in her life, leaning into the "it's just gymnastics" mantra that helped fuel her rise.

Age hasn't caught up to her yet, though she played it relatively safe by her standards on Sunday. She tweaked her right ankle while drilling her electric Yurchenko double pike vault on Friday.

The 14.850 she received for her Cheng vault was still the highest of the night on the event. So was the 14.8 she earned on beam. That 15.400 on floor, too.

Next stop is Antwerp in late September, where Biles will try to add to the 25 world championship medals 18 of them gold she's captured so far.

Jones figures to be on the plane too. The 21-year-old is a marvel on bars, where she thrives despite being

tall (5-foot-6ish) for someone who opts to do this for a living. The crowd erupted when she nailed her dismount, her 15.000 score was tops in the meet on the event and put 10 months filled with injuries that have slowed her training firmly behind her.

Who joins Jones and Biles at worlds remains very much up in the air.

Reigning Olympic champion Sunisa Lee, who has spent most of the year battling a kidney issue her doctors are still trying to get a handle on, could have a chance as a specialist.

Wong, one of several athletes trying to compete at the NCAA and elite levels at the same time, put together two stellar nights that included an elegant bars set and a floor exercise that makes up for in precision what it lacks in power.

Jade Carey and Jordan Chiles, teammates of Biles' at the 2020 Olympics, who have also spent the last two years splitting time between college and elite, weren't quite as sharp. Chiles fell off both the bars and beam. Carey finished in the top 10 on just one event vault where the Americans figure to be loaded.

Biles will lead the charge. She joked she asks herself every day why she's out there. The answer is simple. She feels like she owes it to herself.

"I still feel like I'm capable of doing it," she said.

It certainly looks that way. □

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IS MORE DUSHI

Patrick Mahomes is unanimous choice by AP for the top NFL quarterback

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

Patrick Mahomes is a two-time NFL MVP, a two-time Super Bowl MVP and has led the Kansas City Chiefs to the AFC championship game five straight seasons. Any poll that ranks players has to start with No. 15. Mahomes was a unanimous choice by The Associated Press for the top spot among quarterbacks.

A panel of nine AP Pro Football Writers ranked the top five players at QB, making their selections based on current status entering the 2023 season. First-place votes were worth 10 points. Second through fifth-place votes were worth 5, 3, 2 and 1 points.

Joe Burrow, Josh Allen and Jalen Hurts each received second-place votes. Four-time NFL MVP Aaron Rodgers was named on seven ballots.

Justin Herbert, Kirk Cousins, Trevor Lawrence and Lamar Jackson also received votes.

1. PATRICK MAHOMES, Kansas City Chiefs: Mahomes had another spectacular season despite losing star



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) sets back to pass in the first half of a preseason NFL football game against the New Orleans Saints in New Orleans, Sunday, Aug. 13, 2023.

receiver Tyreek Hill. He received 49 of 50 first-place votes for AP All-Pro and 48 of 50 for AP NFL MVP. If any player has a chance to challenge Tom Brady's seven Super Bowl rings, it's Mahomes. He only turns 28 next month and the Chiefs are built to keep winning. Mahomes and coach Andy Reid are a perfect fit

together.

2. JOE BURROW, Cincinnati Bengals: Burrow edged Allen for the No. 2 spot by one point despite being left off two ballots due to his calf injury.

Burrow got five second-place votes. He's led the Bengals to the AFC championship game against Mahomes and the Chiefs two

years in a row, winning one. Burrow beat Mahomes on the road in the playoffs in 2022 and led the Bengals to a victory over Allen and the Bills on the road in the AFC divisional round last season.

3. JOSH ALLEN, Buffalo Bills: Allen was named on every ballot, getting votes in every spot from Nos. 2-5. Allen

is the only QB in NFL history with three straight seasons throwing 25 touchdown passes and rushing for five scores. Allen has led the Bills to three straight AFC East titles but Buffalo has lost in the divisional round the last two seasons.

4. AARON RODGERS, New York Jets: Rodgers had a disappointing season to finish his career in Green Bay after winning consecutive MVP awards in 2020-21. The 39-year-old future Hall of Famer has been rejuvenated in New York. He'll become a folk hero if he can lead the Jets to a Super Bowl for the first time since Broadway Joe Namath.

5. JALEN HURTS, Philadelphia Eagles: Hurts had a breakout season in 2022, finishing runner-up to Mahomes for AP NFL MVP and third behind Justin Jefferson and Mahomes for AP Offensive Player of the Year. Hurts had a spectacular Super Bowl but the Eagles lost to Mahomes and the Chiefs 38-35. Hurts, who was selected on six of nine ballots, finished one point behind Rodgers for fourth place. □

Associated Press

Andy Reid in the lead spot in AP's NFL Top 5 head coach rankings

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

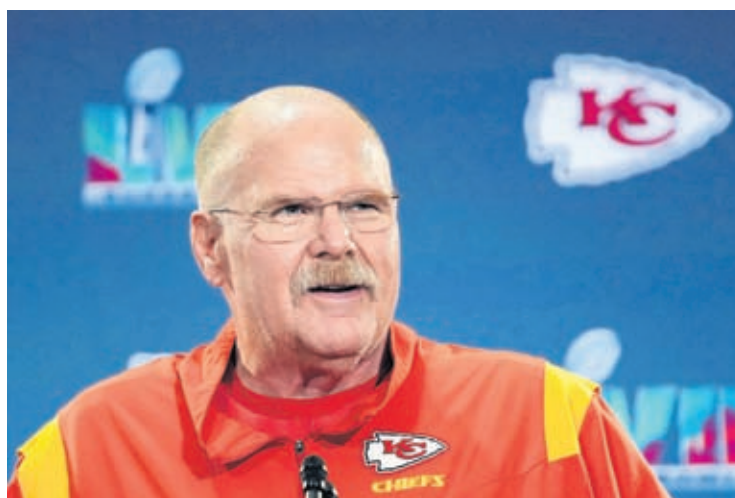
Andy Reid couldn't win the big one until he went to Kansas City and got Patrick Mahomes. Now, there's no telling how many big games the coach affectionately known as "Big Red" will end up winning. Reid was a near-unanimous choice by The Associated Press for the top spot among NFL head coaches, receiving eight of nine first-place votes.

A panel of nine AP Pro Football Writers ranked the top five head coaches, making their selections based on current status entering the 2023 season. First-place votes were worth 10 points. Second through fifth-place votes were worth 5, 3, 2 and 1 points.

Six-time Super Bowl champion Bill Belichick got the other first-place vote. Kyle Shanahan, Mike Tomlin, John Harbaugh, Mike Vra-

bel, Sean McVay and Nick Sirianni each got second-place votes.

A total of 13 coaches received at least one vote,



Kansas City Chiefs head coach Andy Reid smiles prior to answering a question during an NFL football media availability ahead of Super Bowl 57, in Scottsdale, Ariz., Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023.

Associated Press

including Pete Carroll, Doug Pederson, Sean Payton, Sean McDermott and Matt LaFleur.

1. ANDY REID, Kansas City Chiefs: Reid won more games than any coach in the history of the Philadelphia Eagles, leading the franchise to six NFC championship games and one Super Bowl appearance in 14 seasons. He went to Kansas City in 2013 and has led the Chiefs to a winning record 10 straight years, including double-digit wins nine times. The Chiefs have hosted the AFC title game the last five seasons and won two Super Bowls in three tries.

2. BILL BELICHICK, New England Patriots: Belichick is one of three coaches in NFL history to win six cham-

pionships and he ranks third behind Don Shula and Tom Landry on the all-time wins list. However, Belichick hasn't won a playoff game since Tom Brady left New England. He's 80-90 in his career in games Brady didn't start.

3. KYLE SHANAHAN, San Francisco 49ers: Shanahan is the only coach in the top five who hasn't won a Super Bowl. He guided the 49ers to the NFC championship game last season with third-string QB Brock Purdy and led them to one Super Bowl appearance and two NFC championship games with Jimmy Garoppolo. Shanahan edged Tomlin for third place by one point. He was named on five ballots, getting two second-place votes. □